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10/760308



Patentanmeldung Nr. Patent application No. Demande de brevet n°

03290496.3

Der Präsident des Europäischen Patentamts;  
im Auftrag

For the President of the European Patent Office

Le Président de l'Office européen des brevets  
p.o.

R C van Dijk

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Bezeichnung der Erfindung/Title of the invention/Titre de l'invention:  
(Falls die Bezeichnung der Erfindung nicht angegeben ist, siehe Beschreibung.  
If no title is shown please refer to the description.  
Si aucun titre n'est indiqué se référer à la description.)

Method for controlling the operating point of a transistor of a power amplifier

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**Title: Method for Controlling the Operating Point of a Transistor of a Power Amplifier**

**Description**

The invention relates to a method for controlling the operating point of a transistor of a power amplifier for amplifying time division multiplex (access) TDM(A)-signals.

The invention further relates to a computer program for carrying out said method, a power amplifier comprising a transistor the operating point of which is controlled, a transmitter comprising such a power amplifier, a transmitting station comprising at least one of said transmitters and a telecommunications system comprising at least one of said power amplifiers.

In the prior art methods for controlling the operating

point of a transistor of a power amplifier are known. The controlling of the operating point typically becomes necessary because the operating point drifts with respect to temperature variations of the transistor. Additionally, any other motivation for controlling the operating point of the transistor may exist. The typical methods for controlling the operating point comprise for example the steps of:

- detecting a deviation between a set operating point and an actual operating point of said transistor; and
- adjusting the bias of the gate/base of said transistor according to said deviation in order to re-establish said set operating point.

However, when said power amplifier is used for amplifying high frequency HF-modulated signals, for example such as time division multiplex (access) TDM(A)-signals there occurs the problem that the actual operating point of the transistor can not be determined precisely enough due to said HF-signals disturbing said detection. On the other hand the changing of the bias can have an undesired impact on the HF-signal.

Starting from that prior art it is the object of the present invention to improve a known method for controlling the operating point of a transistor of a power amplifier, a computer program for carrying out said method, a power amplifier comprising such a transistor, a transmitter comprising such a power amplifier, a transmitting station comprising at least one of said transmitters and a telecommunications system comprising at least one of said power amplifiers such that the controlling of the operating point can be carried out more precisely and, if critical, without negative impact on the HF-signal even when the

power amplifier amplifies TDM(A)-signals.

This object is solved by the subject-matter of method claim 1. According to that solution at least one of the steps mentioned above is carried out during at least one null power time slot of said TDM(A)-signal.

A null power time slot in the meaning of the invention is a time slot with very low, in particular with null signal power.

The advantage of the proposed solution lies in the fact that the controlling of the operating point of the transistor, i. e. the detection of a deviation between the set operating point and the actual operating point and the adjustment of the bias is not disturbed by HF-signals amplified by the power amplifier. Consequently, a more precise re-establishment of the set operating point is possible. Furthermore, the adjustment itself does not impact the HF-signal if the adjustment is done in the time where no HF-signal is applied to the transistor.

According to a preferred embodiment of said method the single steps necessary for controlling the operating point are carried out during different null power time slots comprised within said TDM(A)-signal. It is not strictly necessary that these time slots occur consecutively; the controlling of the operating point according to the claimed method is also possible during several time slots which do not occur consecutively. However, the single time slots used for carrying out the controlling of the operating point preferably occur within a time interval being much shorter than the time constant of the temperature variations causing the drift of the operating point.

According to another preferred embodiment of the present invention the adjustment of the bias is carried out iteratively during several control loops.

Further, in order to ensure a precise controlling of the operating point the controlling is done only after the transistor has reached a steady state with respect to its temperature after the power amplifier has been switched on. To make sure that the steady state has been reached the controlling operation is for example started after N null power time slots with N e. g. greater than 3, have occurred within said TDM(A)-signal.

Further advantageous embodiments of the method are subject-matters of the dependent claims.

The above-identified object is further solved by a computer program for a controlling unit of a power amplifier comprising a code being adapted to carry out the method according to the invention when running on a microprocessor. Further, the above-identified object is solved by a power amplifier for amplifying TDM(A)-signals, by a transmitter comprising such a power amplifier, by a transmitting station comprising such a transmitter and by a telecommunications system comprising such amplifiers. The advantages of said solutions correspond to the advantages outlined above with respect to the claimed method.

In the following different embodiment of the invention are described in detail by referring to the accompanying figures, wherein

Figure 1 shows a power amplifier;

Figure 2 shows a TDM(A)-signal; and

Figure 3 shows a transmitter, a transmitting station and a telecommunications system.

Figure 1 shows a power amplifier 100 for amplifying time division multiplex (access) TDM(A)-signals in a TDM(A) system, in particular in a Global System for Mobile communications GSM.

Figure 2 shows an example for such a TDM(A)-signal comprising data time slots  $s_i$  with  $i = 1, 3 - 6, 9 - 11, 13$  and 15 and null power time slots  $n_j$  with  $j = 2, 7, 8, 12$  and 14.

The power amplifier 100 shown in figure 1 comprises a transistor 110 for amplifying said TDM(A)-signals. Said transistor may be embodied as bipolar transistor but is preferably embodied as field effect transistor FET-transistor having a source S, a gate G and a drain D. The drain source-connection of said FET-transistor is connected in series with a shunt 120 and said series connection is connected to a power supply voltage  $V_s$ . The measurement voltage dropping across said shunt 120 is input to an operational amplifier 130. Said operational amplifier 130 outputs an analog signal representing the value of said measurement voltage. Said analog signal is digitized by an analog/digital converter 140 before being input into a controlling unit 150.

Said controlling unit is preferably embodied as digital signal processor DSP. Said signal input to said signal processor 150 represents the actual operating point of the transistor 110. The controlling unit compares said actual operating point with a predefined set operating point for said transistor 110. In the case that a deviation between

said set operating point and the actual operating point is detected, the controlling unit 150 outputs a control signal via a digital/analog converter 160 to the gate of said transistor 110. The control signal is typically a gate voltage. It serves for adjusting the bias of the gate of the transistor according to the detected deviation in order to re-establish the set operating point.

According to the invention the controlling unit 150 is embodied to carry out the detection of the deviation and the adjusting of the bias, i. e. the controlling of the operating point of the transistor only during null power time slots occurring within said TDM(A)-signal.

Advantageously, the controlling unit is further embodied to detect the occurrence of said null power time slots n<sub>j</sub>.

The controlling unit 150 is preferably embodied to carry out the controlling of the operating point during several null power time slots which do not necessarily occur consecutively within said TDM(A)-signal. More specifically, the controlling unit 150 may detect the occurrence of said null power time slots within a first one of said null power time slots, may adjust the bias within a second of said null power time slots and may optionally check the adjustment of the bias within a third one of said null power time slots. More generally, the detection of null power slots can be done by the said detection or may be already controlled/known by the controlling unit.

In the case that the null power time slots used for controlling the operating point do not occur consecutively they should occur within a time interval being much shorter than the time constant of the temperature variations causing the drift of the operating point.

The adjustment of the bias may not be done within one control loop but may be carried out iteratively during several control loops.

The method for controlling the operating point of the transistor according to the present invention is preferably carried out by a computer program for the controlling unit 150 when running on a microprocessor 152 of said controlling unit. In the case of such a software-solution the computer program may - perhaps together with other computer programs of the controlling unit - be stored on a computer-readable storage medium, e. g. a disc, a compact disc or a flash memory. When the computer program is stored on such a storage medium it may be sold to customers.

Another possibility to transmit the computer program to customers is its transmission via a communications network, in particular the Internet. In that case, no storage medium is necessary.

As shown in Figure 3, the power amplifier according to the invention may be comprised within a transmitter 200, in particular a radio transmitter. The power amplifier or the transmitter may be part of a transmitting station 300, in particular a radio transmitting base station. Finally, the claimed power amplifier, the transmitter or the transmitting station may be part of a telecommunications system 400, in particular a mobile radio system.

**Claims**

1. Method for controlling the operating point of a transistor of a power amplifier (100) for amplifying time division multiplex (access) TDM(A)-signals, comprising the steps of:

- detecting a deviation between a set operating point and an actual operating point of said transistor (110); and
- adjusting the bias of the gate/base of said transistor (110) according to said deviation in order to re-establish said set operating point.

**characterized in that**

at least one of these steps is carried out during at least one null power time slot ( $n_j$ ) of said TDM(A)-signals.

2. Method according to claim 1, characterized in that the step of adjusting the bias comprises the substeps of:

- detecting the occurrence of said null power time slots ( $n_j$ ) or using the knowledge when they occur; and optionally
- checking the adjustment of the bias.

3. Method according to claim 2, characterized in that the detecting steps and each of the substeps mentioned in claim 2 is carried out in separate null power time slots ( $n_j$ ).

4. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the null power time slots ( $n_j$ ) to be used arise consecutively or not within said

- TDM(A)-signal.
5. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the adjustment of the bias is carried out iteratively during several control loops.
  6. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the set operating point is adapted in response to the temperature in the surrounding of the transistor (110).
  7. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that bias means the gate/base voltage for driving the gate/base of the transistor (110).
  8. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the controlling of the operating point of the transistor (110) is done only after the transistor (110) has reached a steady state with respect to its temperature after a switch-on of the power amplifier.
  9. Method according to claim 8, characterized in that the controlling of the operating point is started after N, e. g. N = 3, null power time slots ( $n_j$ ) have occurred.
  10. Computer program for a controlling unit (150) of a power amplifier (100), comprising code being adapted to carry out the method according to one of claims 1 - 9 when running on a microprocessor (152).
  11. Computer program according to claim 10, characterized in that the code is stored on a computer-readable storage medium.
  12. Power amplifier (100) for amplifying time division multiplex (access) TDM(A)-signals in a TDM(A) system, in particular in a Global System for Mobile

Communications GSM, comprising

- a transistor (110) for amplifying said TDM(A)-signals;
- a shunt (120) being connected in series to the drain-source path or collector-emitter path of said transistor (110) for providing a measurement voltage, the constant component of which representing the actual operating point of said transistor (110); and
- a controlling unit (150) for detecting a deviation between a set operating point and said actual operating point and for adjusting the bias of the gate/base of said transistor (110) according to said deviation in order to re-establish said set operating point;

**characterized in that**

the controlling unit (150) is embodied to detect the occurrence of null power time slots ( $n_j$ ) within said TDM(A)-signals and to carry out the controlling of the operating point during at least one of said null power time slots ( $n_j$ ).

13. Power amplifier (100) according to claim 12, characterized in that the controlling unit (150) is embodied to carry out the controlling of the operating point during several null power time slots ( $n_j$ ) occurring either in a consecutively manner or not.
14. Power amplifier (100) according to claim 13, characterized in that the controlling unit (150) is embodied to carry out the detection of said several null power time slots ( $n_j$ ) during a first one of said

time slots, to re-establish the set operating point during a second one of said time slots and optionally to check the re-established set operating point during a third one of said time slots.

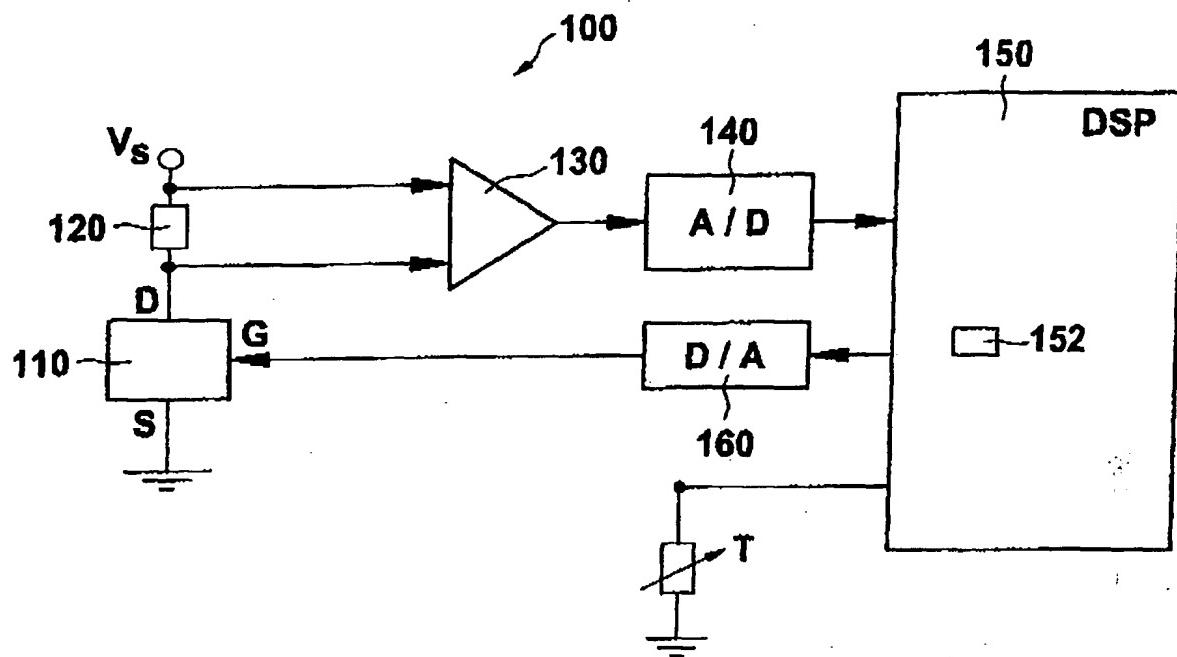
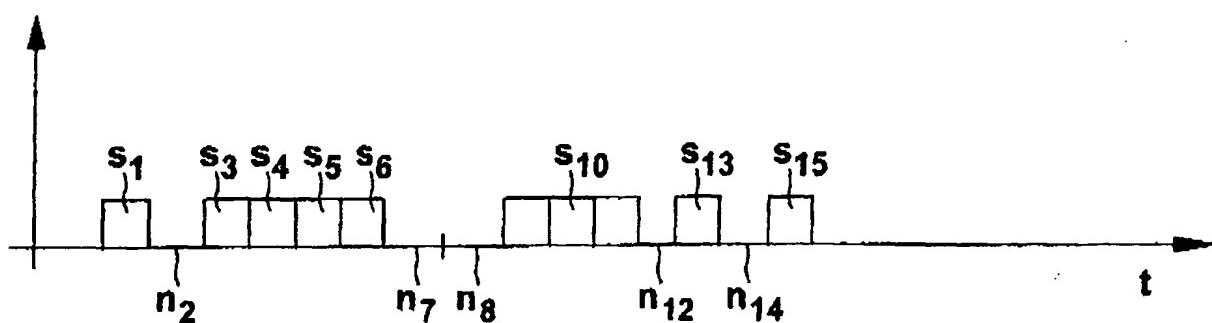
15. Power amplifier (100) according to one of claims 12 - 14, characterized in that the controlling unit (150) is embodied as a digital signal processor.
16. Transmitter (200), in particular a radio transmitter, comprising a power amplifier (100) according to claims 12 - 15.
17. Transmitter station (300), in particular a radio transmitting base station, comprising at least one transmitter according to claim 16.
18. A telecommunications system (400), in particular a mobile radio system, comprising at least one power amplifier (100) according to one of claims 12 - 15.

**Abstract**

The invention relates to a method for controlling the operating point of a transistor (110) of a power amplifier (100) for amplifying time division multiplex (access) TDM(A)-signals. Methods to compensate drifts of the operating point caused by temperature variations are in principle known in the art. However, the methods known in the art have the disadvantage that they are not precise enough during the operation of such power amplifiers, in particular when amplifying high-frequency TDM(A)-signals. In order to overcome said problem the invention proposes to carry out the controlling of the operating point during null power time slots of said TDM-signal.

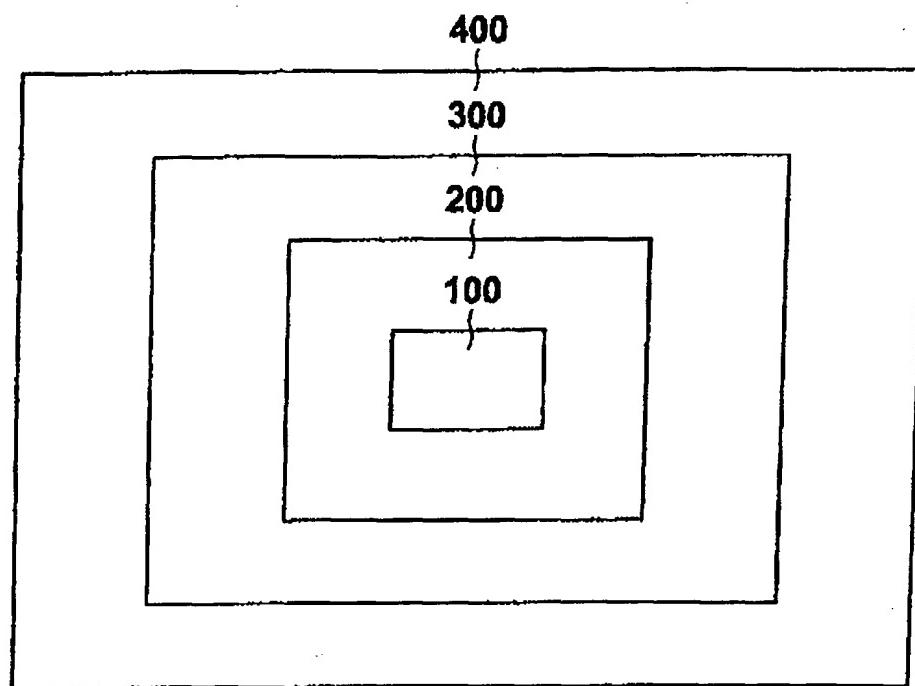
(Figure 1)

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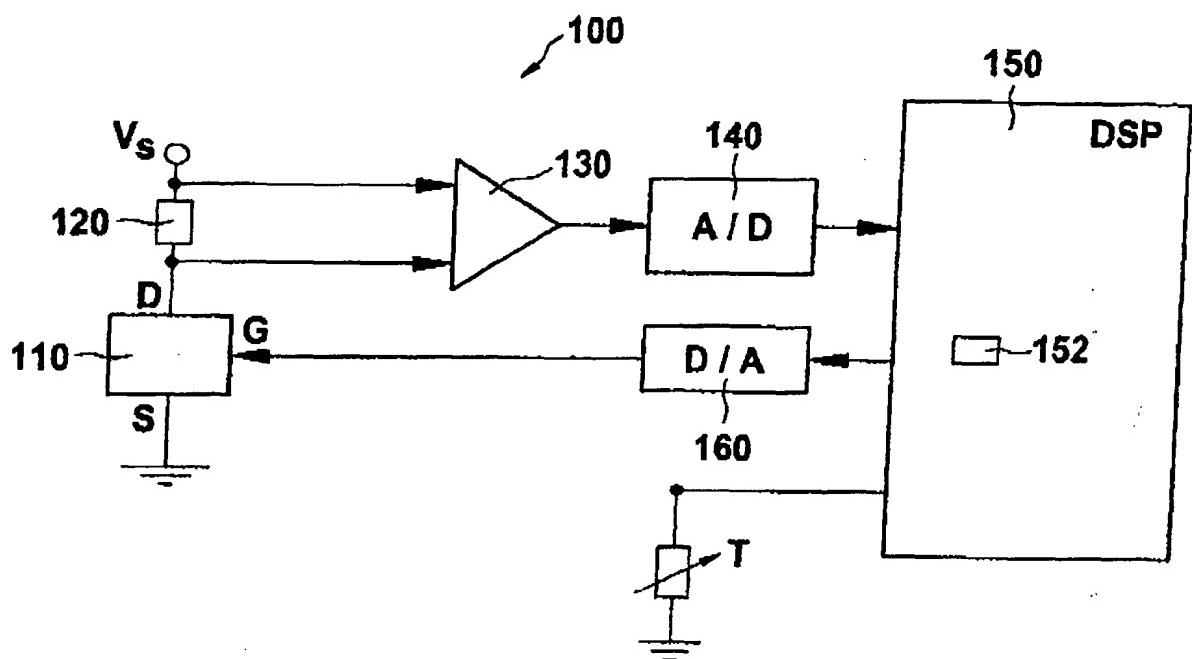
**Fig. 1****Fig. 2**

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**Fig. 3**



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**Fig. 1**

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